

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 EUR-12 L-02 IGA-01 AID-05 DPW-01

SCA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SR-02 ORM-01

NEA-09 /093 W

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R 131443Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3629

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

US MISSION GENEVA 0631

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 3007

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SWEL ET US

SUBJECT: RELIEF OPERATIONS IN ERITREA

REF: (A) STATE 049035; (B) ADDIS 2804; (C) ASMARA 0322;
(D) ADDIS 2960; (E) ADDIS 1988; (F) ASMARA 0238

1. PURSUANT TO REFTTEL A, CHARGE HAS DISCUSSED DESIRABILITY OF INFLUENCING EPMG'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS RELIEF OPERATIONS IN ERITREA WITH PAPAL NUNCIO, GHANAIAAN AMBASSADOR, CANADIAN AMBASSADOR, AND BRITISH AMBASSADOR. SUBSEQUENT TO FIRST-MENTIONED CONVERSATION THE PAPAL NUNCIO HAS TALKED TO THE BELGIAN, DUTCH, AND EGYPTIAN AMBASSADORS ON THE SUBJECT AND INTENDS APPROACH ITALIAN AMBASSADOR WHEN HE RETURNS ADDIS.

2. GHANAIAAN AMBASSADOR (WHO HAS ASKED TO BE FULLY PROTECTED ON HIS CONVERSATIONS) HAS SINCE DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH FONMIN KIFLE, WHO TOOK THE LINE THAT RELIEF SUPPLIES TO ERITREA SHOULD BE HANDLED BY THE ETHIOPIAN RED CROSS. THE CANADIAN AMBASSADOR TOLD THE CHARGE THAT HE WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH HIS GOVERNMENT ON THE SUBJECT AND MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE ABLE TO DISCUSS IT WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER. THE BRITISH
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AMBASSADOR TOLD THE CHARGE THAT HE WOULD DISCUSS THE SUBJECT

WITH HIS EEC AMBASSADORIAL COLLEAGUES ON MARCH 10. HE REPORTED LATER THAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WERE RELUCTANT TO BROACH THE MATTER WITH THE EPMG BEFORE THEY KNEW MORE ABOUT ASMARA'S REAL RELIEF REQUIREMENTS. ACCORDING TO THE PAPAL NUNCIO, THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD CONTACT HIS GOVERNMENT ON THE SUBJECT BUT SPOKE VERY CAUTIOUSLY REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF A DEMARCHE TO THE EPMG:

3. THE SKEPTICISM OF THE ICRC REP REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF RELIEF ACTION BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE ETHIOPIAN RED CROSS IS DISCUSSED IN REFTELS D AND E. ADDITIONAL UNFAVORABLE COMMENTARY ON THE ERC IS CONTAINED IN REFTEL F.

4. THE EMBASSY HAS EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN REGARDING THE NEED FOR RELIEF SHIPMENTS TO ASMARA IN ONE SECTION OF A RECENT AIDE MEMOIRE LEFT WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER (REFTEL B, TO DEPT ONLY, NODIS).

5. THE EMBASSY IS NOT PLANNING A FURTHER APPROACH TO THE EPMG AT THE PRESENT TIME BUT WILL CONTINUE TO CONSULT WITH APPROPRIATE EMBASSIES HERE ON THE SUBJECT. WE DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT ANY EMBASSY HERE WILL EXERT MUCH PRESSURE ON THE EPMG ON THIS SUBJECT IN THE ABSENCE OF CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT THE NEED FOR MEDICAL SUPPLIES OR FOODSTUFFS IS SEVERE. ANY FURTHER INFORMATION WHICH COMGEN ASMARA CAN SUBSEQUENTLY DEVELOP ON THIS SUBJECT BEYOND THAT CONTAINED IN REFTEL C WILL BE HELPFUL. HARD INFORMATION NO NEEDS OF PEOPLE LIVING IN REFUGEE CAMPS OR CHURCHES WOULD BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL. A REPORT IS CIRCULATING HERE THAT THESE PEOPLE HAVE NOW BEEN OUSTED FROM THE CHURCHES. WYMAN

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